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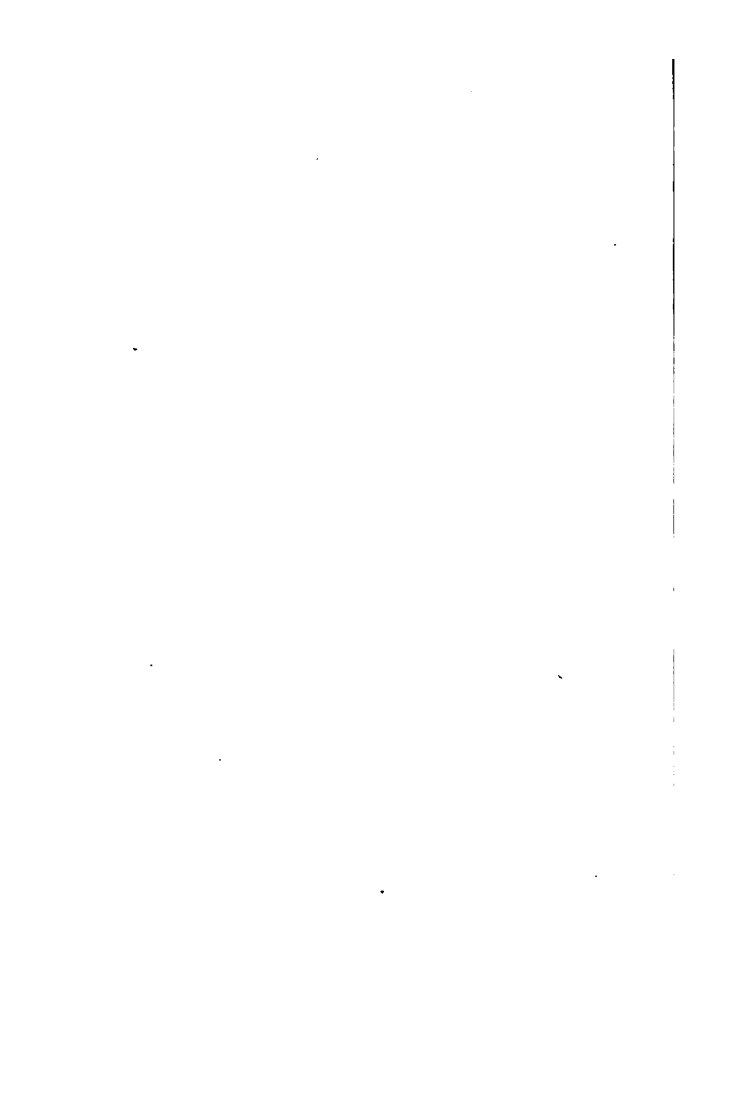
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A SCOTCHMAN ABROAD.

BY

RICHARD KNILL,

MISSIONARY.

"And in God's house for evermore
My dwelling place shall be."

23 Ps. Scotch Version.

LONDON: JOHN SNOW,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCXLI.

413.



JOHNS, PRINTER,
Red Lion Court, Fleet Street.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

HIS EARLY LIFE AT HOME.

Parents. Birth. School. Trade	5
-------------------------------------	---

CHAPTER II.

SETTLES IN A FOREIGN LAND.

Worldly prosperity. Manner of conducting business. The state of religion	11
--	----

CHAPTER III.

HIS CONVERSION TO GOD.

A scene at Chapel. Lydia. A Doctor. Visit to his Minister. A Materialist. English preaching. Conversion. The spy-glass.....	17
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

HE IS CHOSEN A DEACON.

Death of a Deacon. Qualifications of a Deacon. He is chosen. His disappointments in seeking to do good. His gratitude to God for being a watch-maker. Advantages of early training.....	38
---	----

CHAPTER V.

THE CLOSING SCENE.

The long time given to display his Christian character. Meditations among the tombs. Signals for departure. His legacy to the Church. Falls asleep in Jesus.....	46
--	----

A SCOTCHMAN ABROAD.

CHAPTER I.

HIS EARLY LIFE AT HOME.

Parents. Birth. School. Trade.

EARLY in the month of June 1819, the ship Richmond, captain Horne, commander, anchored in the Madras roads, bound for England: I engaged a passage in her, and came home. On our way we touched at St. Helena, where the Imperial exile Napoleon Bonaparte then resided. We remained four days on the island, took in refreshments for the voyage, and on the last day of November, set our feet on the British shores.

My constitution had been so much shattered by the heat of India, that medical men strongly advised me to go to some frozen region, such as Canada or Russia. I yielded to their advice, and after visiting the principal

towns in England and Ireland, sailed in a London trader for the Gulf of Finland; contrary winds and stormy weather kept us so long at sea, that when we were within ten miles of our destination, the winter set in, the Gulf was frozen over, and we stuck fast in the ice. Some Russian officers came to us in "the ice-boat" and offered to help us. Soon after their departure, it pleased God to do for us, what all the world could not do. He sent us a strong westerly wind, which raised the waters, broke the ice, and set us free. Then commenced a thirteen years residence in a northern region, and here I first saw the subject of this narrative. I knew him well, and the more I knew of him, the more I loved and revered his character.

His parents were members of the Kirk of Scotland, and they carefully instructed their son in the doctrines and duties contained in the Ritual of that church, and it was no difficult task to teach him, for he was of quick understanding.

He was born not far from Falkirk, at a

time when Scottish piety was in a healthy state. The religion of his father's house called forth his grateful praises long after he had left the parental roof. He has said to me more than once, when referring to home, "Though I long forgot the pious breathings of my parents, yet now it gives me the purest joy to recollect their conversations as we sat together by the fire-side on a Sabbath evening. I have the fullest confidence that they loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and that they are both in heaven." These are delightful recollections of departed relatives, but such alas! as some families dare not cherish.

There were many things about Scottish piety at that time of an enchanting nature, and I hope they remain; but "*the religious order of the family*" was the distinguishing trait. The whole household assembled in the hall (or kitchen) in the morning before breakfast for *family prayer*, and in the evening before supper. The master or "*gude man*," as he was termed, led their devotions, *every one having his Bible in his hand*. This was

the stated course, even in seed time and harvest. Between five and six in the morning was the hour of prayer in these busy times.

On Sabbath all went to church, however great the distance, except one person in turn to take care of the house or younger children, or to tend the cattle. After a late dinner on their return, the family assembled around the master, who first catechized the children, and then the servants. Each was required to tell what he remembered of the religious service they had joined in at the house of God. Each repeated a portion of the shorter catechism, which begins thus:—

Q. What is the chief end of man?

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever.

And then all were examined on heads of divinity from the mouth of the master. Throughout the whole of the Sabbath all worldly concerns, except such as necessity or mercy, required to be attended to, were strictly laid aside; and nothing was allowed

to enter into our conversation “ *save subjects of religion.*”*

Amidst scenes like these my good Scotchman spent his early days, and though they were sadly forgotten for a season, yet they did him good in his latter end.

He was a clever boy when he attended the day school in his native place, and even then raised the hopes of his family respecting his future excellence. In addition to his love of reading, and other branches which were taught at the parish school, he shewed a great taste for machinery, and in order to gratify this disposition, his father, a discreet man, who understood the importance of giving a right direction to a boy's mind, bound him an apprentice to a watch and clock maker. Here he had full scope for his opening powers, and his proficiency was most laudable. He passed through the whole of his apprenticeship with great satisfaction to all parties, and few young men ever left their master's house so universally beloved. This is a fine part

* Dr. Waugh's Life.

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of a young man's life, and augurs well for the future. There is no general rule without exceptions ; but in nine cases out of ten, the youth who conducts himself consistently while he is an apprentice, is afterwards found to be the rising and honourable man. The first is the blossom, the second is the fruit.

CHAPTER II.

SETTLES IN A FOREIGN LAND.

Worldly prosperity. Manner of conducting business.

The state of religion.

THE term of his apprenticeship having expired, he walked southward, and crossed the Tweed, and went to England to seek further improvement in his trade. First he worked in a town in the north, and next went to London, and ultimately he left Great Britain altogether, and went to live and die in a foreign land.

Circumstances directed him to one of the most magnificent cities in the world. Here he gradually felt his way; conducted himself with consummate prudence; and commenced business first on a small scale, which continually enlarged, until, like many a Scotchman abroad, he realized considerable property.

As a man of business, he was noted for four things, worthy of imitation, *i. e.* ingenuity, industry, integrity, and punctuality. The great numbers of nobility and gentry who

dealt with him for forty years, had the fullest confidence in him as a skilful and truly honourable man. One thing I may just notice, which will give a young beginner a good idea of his manner of conducting business.

The commander of an American ship said to a resident, "I have a very handsome watch, which stopped as we were crossing the Atlantic. Can you recommend me a clever man to examine it?"

Mr. ——— was named, and the captain called with his watch. "When shall I call for it," said the captain.

"In a day or two, if you please."

He called, and the watch was ready. He then went to dine with the gentleman who related the matter to me.

As they were sitting at dinner, the American said, "I never met with such a watch-maker in my life, as that one who repaired my watch."

"Why, what is the matter?"

"Matter," said the captain, "he would not have any thing for it. I expected he

would charge five or ten dollars at least; but when I asked for his bill, he replied, 'I shall not charge you any thing for *that*.' 'Nothing,' I said—'nothing?' 'No, it was only a hair. I removed it in a few minutes—I shall not make any charge.'" The captain added, "if ever I have an opportunity to recommend your watchmaker I shall do it, for I never was treated so by any stranger before."

When I became acquainted with my friend, I mentioned this circumstance to him, and asked if he recollected it?

"O yes, very well," he replied, "it was not a new thing to me, although it was to the captain. I have made a practice of acting in this manner, ever since I began my business in this city, and I have been a great gainer by it in the end. My customers found that I did not wish to take advantage of them, and this in the long run has brought many customers and much business—besides a good deal of the pleasure which arises from having done unto others, as you wish they should do unto you."

His tact in the management of any affair was admirable. His self-command was so great, that he seemed never to lose his *temper*. His perfect knowledge of his trade prevented him from making *blunders*—and his system and order, and industry and intelligence, and *early rising*, prevented him from ever being in a bustle. When people are in a bustle, it usually arises from previous neglect. If people are too late for the coach, or too late for their appointments, it is a bad sign. *My friend had too much to do, to afford to be in a bustle.* It was a fine trait in his character, and may be treasured up in the memory of many young tradesmen with great advantage.

But though trade flourished, and money could be realized, yet these things related only to the present world. There was an awful drawback on all this, when viewed with regard to futurity. One hundred and twenty years ago, Dr. Watts said, “A Briton who loves his religion, and values his soul, will not leave his country to settle in a

foreign land." The Doctor thought of the bearing it might have on such person's eternal destiny. He saw the danger. He sounded the trumpet of alarm—and though great and happy changes have taken place in all *our* foreign possessions, yet I know there is great danger still. O yes! many a promising youth has thrown his religion overboard near the Cape of Good Hope; and many others have done the same when sailing up the Baltic. I have seen the effects of it with my own eyes, and bear witness. May others take warning, who shall sail in the same track.

The young watchmaker soon found, that in his new situation, he had no man like minded with his pious father, to help him on the way to heaven. Here the sanctity of the Sabbath was as little regarded, as it was in France. Good sound evangelical preaching, such as he heard in the kirk, was unknown. A prayer-meeting was not heard of. Pious, edifying, heavenly conversation was never introduced. No man would

take him by the hand *there*, and say, "Young man, you have a soul to be saved,"—no not one,—and as a natural consequence, though he retained all his prudent, careful, and industrious habits, yet the religion of *good old Scotia*, was completely put into the shade. The Sabbath in summer was usually spent in visiting and seeing fine sights; and the Sabbath in winter was spent in eating and drinking, and dancing, and card playing. He has told me with his eyes moistened by his tears, that for the long space of two-and-twenty years, he never heard the subject of religion once introduced, except by some witty jester, in order to turn it into a laugh. I do not pretend to say, that this was the case with every individual, or with every family, but it was the case with most. O what a fearful state of things, amidst great outward prosperity! It may well lead us to exclaim, "*What is a man profited though he gain the whole world his own soul, or what shall a man change for his soul?*" Matt. xvi. 26.

CHAPTER III.

HIS CONVERSION TO GOD.

A scene at Chapel. Lydia. A Doctor. Visit to his Minister. A Materialist. English Preaching. Conversion. Spy-glass.

It was late in the year 1820 that I first saw this worthy tradesman, and I suppose the scene will never be forgotten by me. The cold northern winter had set in. We were assembled on the Sabbath morning for the worship of Almighty God. The weather was very piercing; and most of my congregation were dressed in "fur cloaks," or in "bear-skin shubes," which they wrapped closely around them. The contrast was uncommonly striking, between this congregation, and the white flowing robes which a little before I had witnessed on the burning plains of India. But there was one object above all others which rivetted my attention, and gladdened my heart. It was as follows. My text that morning was, "*Good hope through grace.*" 2 Thess. ii. 16. In

and eagerly inquired, "was not this sufficient?"

I did not give a direct answer, but observed, "I am very thankful that you did not die."

At this she seemed hurt, and said sharply, "What! do you think I should not have gone to heaven?"

"Yes. I am sure you could not in the way you mentioned. Do you not perceive that according to your plan, you were going to heaven without Christ? Now this is what no sinner has done since Adam fell, and what no sinner will be able to do while the world stands. Be very thankful, that you did not go out of life, resting on this delusive foundation. Jesus Christ came into the world on purpose to seek and to save the lost. He says, 'I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father *but by me.*' John xiv. 6.

God carried home this word to her heart. Light broke in upon her mind—from that day a decided change took place in the young lady's views, and a corresponding holiness, and

love, and zeal, and usefulness adorned all her future life.

Before I finished this short description, I saw a mild sedate looking person just before me, deeply affected. The tears were streaming down his placid cheeks, but he never attempted to wipe them away. No, he let them trickle first upon his sleeve, and then let them fall on the floor. Had he taken his pocket handkerchief to wipe them away, it might have been discovered by those who sat near him, but Scotchman like, he did not wish it to be known that he had shed a tear. However he could not conceal them from me, and though I could not tell whether they were tears of penitence or joy, yet I was glad to see them. It was an indication, that there was a movement upon his soul. So it passed on.

The next Sabbath I saw the same sedate person sitting near me again, but knew not who he was. I perceived also that he felt deeply, but not in the same way. My text was about a foreigner. "And on the Sabbath

bath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made, and we sat down, and spake unto the women who resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the City of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul." Acts xvi. 13. 14.

I observed there were many points of resemblance between Lydia's circumstance and our own.

She was a foreigner, so were most of us.

She had come to a strange country for purposes of trade, so had many of us.

She might never see her native land again, and this was true respecting us.

On the Sabbath she left her neighbours and went to the house of prayer. This was right, but do you think she left her shop open all the while? Is it likely that while she was out professedly worshipping Jehovah, that she had some in her employ at home selling purple?

Whether this were the case with Lydia or not I cannot tell, but I saw shops open this morning, and articles exposed for sale just as if it had been Monday. These were the shops of foreigners!! What think you of this my brethren—do these people fear God?

This touched the feelings of my friend. He thought it was pointed at him, and he was overwhelmed.

Next morning a reverend Doctor called at his shop about a watch, when he began. His heart was full, and out of the abundance of the heart his mouth spake. "Doctor, said he, I think Mr. K. was very hard upon me yesterday. I am sure if he knew how I respect him, he would not have wounded me as he did; and I think it was very unfriendly in any person to tell him of it. I am sure it was ——— or ———."

The Doctor listened with surprise and delight, and hope. Ah! thought he, there is something good going on. An arrow has struck his heart. So he inquired, "what do you mean, Sir?"

"Why, it is something like this. I have the property of a great number of persons in my possession, and it is as much my duty to take care of their watches, as it is for a farmer to lead his ox or his ass to the water. Now watches sustain an injury if they are not wound up daily. Therefore on Sabbath morning, I open *this* iron chest—take out the watches, one by one, and wind them up, and then place them on the pins round about my windows—and having done that, I take them down again, and place them in the iron chest, until Monday morning. I say it was very unkind in any person to go and tell Mr. K. of this."

When he had gone coolly through with his statement, the Doctor said to this effect, "I can throw a little light on this subject. I believe Mr. K. never heard of you in his life, and as for any one ever telling him about your watches, be assured, nothing of the kind has been done. I took him to chapel, and we did not pass through your street, nor near your house—but there were

shops open in the street through which we passed, and it was about them the remarks were made, and not about you. The best way to satisfy your mind on the subject is to call on Mr. K. I am sure he will be glad to see you."

Now the secret came out, who the person was whose tears I had seen trickling down upon his sleeve; and on the 24th of March, 1821—he called on me. The account which he gave of the loving kindness of God to his soul was so cheering, so interesting, so striking, that immediately on his departure, I noted down many of his sayings in my journal.

After a few remarks on the general state of religion around us, he began about himself, "I am come Sir, to tell you what the Lord has done for my soul."

"Welcome, welcome," I replied, "there are no visits so much to be desired as those which respect eternity. Then tell me what the Lord hath done for your soul."

"O!" replied the happy man, "he hath

done great things for me, whereof I am glad. My experience is much like that described by St. Peter, "Whom having not seen ye love, and though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." 1 Peter i. 8.

"This is happiness indeed Sir; may it ever continue. Have you been long favoured with it?"

"Not long," he replied. "Alas! more than forty years passed away before I knew any thing about it. But I must go back a little. I was born at —— in Scotland, and was trained up as thousands in that country are, to reverence the Bible, the Lord's day, and the ordinances of the Gospel. At an early age, I accompanied my much honoured parents to the Lord's table. My head was well stored with Scriptural knowledge, and my conduct was irreproachable.

"After I arrived at manhood, I left Scotland, and resided some time in the North of England, at —— . In this town there was no kirk, but a Relief church, which differs

from the Kirk of Scotland chiefly in what is called patronage ; that is to say, the Relief people choose their own minister ; but most of the kirks have patrons, and the patrons put what minister they please over the congregation. However this proved no impediment to my joining the Relief, and I constantly attended the Word and Sacraments at the Relief church.

“ After some time, I made the acquaintance of an excellent young gentleman, who invited me to a prayer-meeting, where several pious persons met once a week. Their prayers, and the conversation of my young friend, led me strongly to suspect the genuineness of my religion ; *that it was not the religion of the heart*, which is the only sacrifice that can be pleasing in the sight of God. My doubts on this head gradually increased, until I became quite uneasy ; yet I mentioned it to no creature. In this state I continued until one evening at the prayer-meeting, I felt a degree of peace and joy, to which I had been a stranger. My friends perceived a change,

and imputed it to some derangement of mind. I was henceforth sent into the country for change of air, and company. Soon after this I went to London, and my religious feelings died away—next I sailed for this country. Here I never saw any person who spoke of religion. I was not happy, nor could I get happiness. There was preaching at ———, and I sometimes attended, but never heard any thing that gave me either light or comfort. Still I knew that I was not right, nor could I find out by what means I could get right. But my anxiety rested in my own bosom. My dearest friends, yea, my own wife, knew nothing of it. This was the case for many years.

“ At last I took up a new way of reconciling matters. I tried to become a *materialist*. From the instructions of my earliest years, I well knew that God is a being of infinite purity ; and I well knew also that men in all ranks, and in all ages are polluted ; and I concluded, that it was impossible for such a holy God to admit sinners into his presence.

I could not understand how God could be a just God, and a Saviour; how he could be what I perfectly understand now,—a sin-hating God, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. All my difficulties were about the grand doctrine of justification, and I sought comfort in the hope that the body and the soul would sleep together, and be annihilated.

“This was my last resort, and a miserable one indeed it was, for sometimes a thought like the following would rush into my mind, and pierce me through and through: — ‘*But suppose the Bible should be true, what will become of me then!!*’ Such a pang as this would render me miserable. It often happened also, when I lay down upon my bed, that thoughts like these would occupy my mind, ‘Soon my body must be stretched in the coffin, what will become of me then? Is there a hereafter? Is it possible? How can man be just with God? How can a sinner be made holy? O Lord, if there be a hereafter, prepare me for it.’ This was the state

of my mind for years, and all this while my friends thought me a happy man; and even a religious man, although I studiously avoided entering on religious subjects, because I was persuaded that I knew nothing about it. I was not certain if religion were not all a fable.

“ A few years ago, when English preaching was commenced in ———, a beam of hope sprung up in my mind; ‘ now then, if there be such a thing as religion, I hope God will cause me to know it.’ I will go and hear; and I went, but I never felt any thing but a hard repulsive heart to every sermon which I heard. I still attended, and when a new preacher came, I again hoped that God would show me by the new preacher something that would benefit me; but no! I once heard a sermon on the barren fig-tree, which terrified me. I was filled with horror, but it left me where it found me,—in *darkness*.

“ Mr. ——— preached a sermon, which appeared personal, and I felt hurt, and thought I would attend the preaching no more. All was dark, and my old ideas of

annihilation grew stronger. The only sermon which seemed to do me any good, was from the text, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst, give him drink, thereby thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.' This sermon reconciled me to the passage, which before I thought seemed contrary to the mind of a merciful God.

"Amidst all this conflict of thought and of feeling, a new set of expectations were raised in my soul. It was occasioned by a few words being mentioned to the following effect:—'that a missionary had just returned from India to England, unable to bear the heat of the torrid zone; that his medical attendant had advised his trying a cold bracing climate, and that it was likely he would visit us.' As soon as I heard it, I thought, this is remarkable indeed. Surely he will not come all the way from India to this frozen region, without bringing good tidings. O, if there be any reality in religion, may God show it to me by this man. I thought much of your coming; I thought,

the time long, and at last you arrived. I went with strong desires for light and comfort, but none came. I returned to my house, disappointed, and I could not conceal it. I was mortified and confounded, and I said to my wife, 'It is the same old story. Depend upon it, there is nothing at all in it. There is not one of them who tells us how we can get to heaven.' My wife seemed alarmed; I had never expressed my views on the subject before, and she replied, 'Dear, do not talk so, I wonder to hear *you* talk so.' After this I refrained from further remarks and to prevent my family from knowing what were my sentiments, I went to hear you again. But on the third Sabbath evening, I returned and threw off my shube, and said to myself, 'This is the last time. I will go no more. What use is it? not one of them shows us how a holy God can admit a polluted sinner into his presence.' I now quite settled it in my mind that I would not go to chapel any more.

"Now here comes a point which I must not

overlook. Here the finger of God is very manifest. On the fourth Sabbath morning when I had not the least intention of going, my eldest son said to me, 'Father, I cannot hear the minister's voice, where we usually sit, I wish you would go with me near to the pulpit, then perhaps I shall hear.' I did not like to refuse him, therefore I went; and O sir, how shall I express it,—when I left my house, all was dark with my soul. I had no conception how God could be just, and yet the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. Yes, it was on this point that I was completely in the dark, and so it remained until you related the anecdote about the young lady."

"And what effect did the relating of that anecdote produce?"

"Indeed it was wonderful. While you were showing the fallacy of her hope, and declaring that Jesus Christ is the only hope of the lost, that none can come unto the Father but by him, a flood of light burst in upon my mind. I saw the whole plan of

salvation with as much distinctness as if I had studied the subject for a thousand years. I was overwhelmed with joy. I saw the fulness, the freeness, the all-sufficiency of Christ, in such a clear and glorious manner, that if I had possessed a thousand souls, I could have committed them all into his hands, and I did embrace him with joy unspeakable.

“ Indeed I could have rejoiced that moment to have escaped from this earthly tabernacle, and to have entered the happy world where Jesus is incessantly adored ! Two and twenty years had I lived in this city without one tear bedewing my cheek, but at this season I felt, as it were, my whole soul dissolved.”

Our conversation lasted for a long time, and much more was said by both of us, but this is the pith of it.

Such impassioned language coming from a young man of warm temperament, would have excited my fears ; but here I saw a model of meekness and prudence, of thoughtfulness and sedateness ; a Christian opening his mind for the first time in his life on the

subject of experimental religion, and in such a way as filled my soul with praise. I have often thought of it since, and the more I think of it, the less I am astonished at his language. The Patriarchs, and Prophets, and Apostles, and Martyrs, often break out in extacy; and we should all have more extatic joy, if we often recounted the loving-kindness of the Lord, and looked *back* to the *rock*, and *down* to the *pit* from which we have been taken: When the Lord turned again the captivity of his people, they were like unto men that dream; the joy appeared too great to be a reality: but, when they were assured of it, then was their mouth filled with laughter, and their tongues with praise. Psalm cxxvi: 1, 2.

Soon after this interview, he joined the church, and had the comfort also of seeing his better half uniting with him in sacred things, and walking like Zachariah and Elizabeth in' all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord, blameless.

In the following summer, another part of

his history appeared in striking contrast with his present holy and happy experience.

A lady had requested me to get her a spy-glass, and as I was comparatively a stranger in the country, I applied to my friend, as an old resident, for advice where to get it. I called on him, and explained my errand. "Do you want a spy-glass?" said he, "Then walk in, and I will tell you all about it." Being seated, he began, "A thought has just occurred to me on this point. Before I knew you I generally spent a part of the summer Sabbaths in visiting the islands which are near us; and in order to have a full enjoyment of the scenery, I bought a spy-glass; and when I came to a beautiful spot, I sat down and took my glass and feasted my eyes with the objects of nature, and art, by which I was surrounded. But now, thanks be to God, I have other and more delightful occupation for my Sabbaths, and I have more glorious scenes to gaze upon, than can be seen through the finest telescope. Faith is the substance of things hoped for — the

evidence of things not seen. God has given to us great and precious promises, and having these glorious things to meditate upon, I feel as if I had no more call for my spy-glass, I will therefore give it to you."

I received it from his hands with peculiar emotions, and keep it as a precious relic, something for my children to look at, as a trophy of the grace of God. I have other precious relics from other persons, and no old general ever looked with so much pleasure on a sword which he had wrested from the hand of some powerful enemy; or the colours which were taken in the battle field, as I experience when viewing these bloodless victories of the Gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER IV.

HE IS CHOSEN A DEACON.

Death of a Deacon. Qualification of a Deacon. He is chosen. His disappointments in seeking to do good. His gratitude to God for being a watch-maker. Advantages of early training.

In the winter of 1823, a dangerous fever raged in the city, and removed many of its inhabitants to the grave. One of my excellent deacons—also a Scotchman—and a man greatly beloved, was attacked by the fever, and died.

Being thus suddenly deprived of a helper in the work of the Lord, our eyes were directed to the subject of this narrative to fill his place. There were several things about him which led to this decision. The following reference is made to it in my journal. "Nov. 17, 1823. Preached relative to the choice of a deacon in the room of dear Mr. ———. The text was, "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you, seven

men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost, and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word: and the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." Acts vi. 3, 4; 5.

After sermon, the members of the Church publicly chose Mr. ———. The Lord be praised for his goodness to this man. He was the first fruits of my ministry in this city. May he ever adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

The office of deacon as defined by John Brown of Haddington is to serve tables—the Lord's table—the minister's table, and the table of the poor. And I hardly know a greater calamity to a minister and congregation, than when a deacon does not know how to perform his office; or else wants the *spirit* of his office—that is, when he happens to be a man of hasty temper, or overbearing manners, or of a contracted

and grovelling mind, or of niggardly or selfish habits. I rejoice to look back and think, that my deacon was the very opposite of all this. His temper was just like a lamb—I never saw him ruffled. His manners were the most obliging. His wishes to do good were as expansive as the wide world. Indeed he had a good report of all men. His house was noted for hospitality, and was always well stored by his equally kind hearted wife. During the time that I kept house as a bachelor, they always took care on the Saturday to provide me with my Sunday's dinner. All that he gave away in the course of forty years is known only to God ; but I believe he never turned a deaf ear to the tale of woe, and never shut up his bowels of compassion to a neighbour or a countryman in distress. I had many opportunities of knowing what he did in the way of benevolence, and scarcely ever knew one act more nobly.

As a man of God he laboured to do good to the people among whom he lived, but he

was often much discouraged in these attempts. Perhaps if I mention two instances, it will suffice to shew other devout people, that if they meet with difficulties in their benevolent labours, they do not stand alone.

A tradesman who used to supply the family with meal and flour, was also very fond of *talking* about religion. He was not unlike the man whom Bunyan calls, "*Mr. Talkative*," in the Pilgrim's Progress. The watchmaker agreed with the mealman, in all he said about religion—but added, there must be something more—there is the practical part, "for faith without works is dead."

In order to convey to the man's mind fully what he intended, he gave him a solemn and searching tract, and requested him to read it at home. He took it, but soon returned it again, saying, *It is too strict. It is too strict*, no man can carry on business, if he acts according to that Tract—*It is too strict.*

In another case he was equally unsuccessful, but it affected him more deeply. He

was in possession of sweet spiritual peace. The 23rd Psalm, which his mother taught him, he could now adopt as his own happy language. Yes he could say,—

“The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want,
He makes me down to lie,
In pastures green he leadeth me,
The quiet waters by.
My soul he doth restore again,
And me to walk doth make,
Within the paths of righteousness,
E’en for his own name’s sake.
Yea, tho’ I walk in death’s dark vale,
Yet will I fear none ill,
For thou art with me, and thy rod
And staff me comfort still.”

This was happiness almost celestial; and he was pressing home upon the conscience of a countryman, the importance of seeking it—the blessedness of enjoying it—and the impossibility of being prepared to meet God, if this were neglected. At this, his friend, in order to cut the matter short, exclaimed, “Gatova! Gatova”—as much as to say, “I am quite ready. I am prepared

whenever God shall call." He told me that this struck him to the heart—and prevented him from ever opening his lips on this subject to his friend again.

In my constant visits to him, I do not recollect that I ever found him gloomy. His hope in Christ was strong. His knowledge of the way of salvation was simple, clear, and very full of consolation. The evidences of his own conversion, were marked and striking. He seemed constantly to walk with God; take the following as a specimen. I called one morning just to inquire for the family, when he rose and took me by the hand, and said, "I have been meditating on the goodness of God to me, that I was brought up to the business of a watchmaker. I prefer it to every other trade or occupation. Think, sir, of my advantages. I can keep myself engaged for hours together in meditating upon God, although I am here in the midst of my business. If I were a merchant, or a banker, or an architect, my mind would be neces-

sarily drawn away; but now, I am so well acquainted with every thing that comes into my hand, that it scarcely costs me an anxious thought. O the boundless love of God! O the depth of the riches of God's goodness to me!" This was turning his shop into the very gate of heaven. O the wonderful adaptation of the religion of the Bible! It enables a man to hold communion with God, amid the busy scenes of a workshop, or a harvest field.

Now also, he found the advantages of the parental care and ministerial care which had been bestowed upon him in youth. His mind seemed to be like a large seed bed, in which much precious seed had been sown, and which had remained under the clods, unproductive—but now, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, "like showers that water the earth," this seed was springing up and bringing forth a rich harvest.

Pious parents, and holy ministers, and zealous Sunday School Teachers, may see much to encourage them in this experience

—and the language of the poet is again fulfilled :

“ Tho’ seed lie buried long in dust,
It sha’nt deceive their hope :
The precious grain can ne’er be lost,
For grace insures the crop.”

CHAPTER V.

THE CLOSING SCENE.

The long time given to display his Christian Character. Meditations among the Tombs. Signals for departure. His Legacy to the Church. Falls asleep in Jesus.

It was nearly twenty years from the day that he was converted, until he was received up into glory—and it may truly be said that, during the whole of this time, he was ripening for heaven. But if he had died in the same year, or in the same month, or in the same hour in which Christ was formed in him the hope of glory, I should have had the fullest assurance of his final happiness. He was brought as in a moment out of darkness into marvellous light. “A flood of light,” said he, “burst in upon my mind. I saw the whole plan of salvation with as much distinctness as if I had studied the subject for a thousand years. If I had possessed a thousand souls, I could have committed them all

into the hands of Jesus, and I did embrace him with joy unspeakable. Indeed I could have rejoiced that moment to have escaped from this earthly tabernacle, and to have entered the happy world where Jesus is incessantly adored." Yet, notwithstanding all this, I am thankful that God in his good pleasure spared him so long, to bless the church and the world by his active agency, and by that most powerful of all sermons—the example of a holy life.

His demeanor in the house of prayer was peculiarly interesting. It did me good to see him enter; and when listening to the words of eternal life, his face often appeared as it had been the face of an angel. I do not recollect ever to have seen him come in after the service had commenced; he had too much reverence for God, and too much love for his neighbours, to disturb them in their devotions. This also was one of the good effects of system. How beautiful. O if every man was thus!

In the country in which he lived there is a great number of 'Saints' days'—and these

are any thing but "Holy days." They tend to idleness, dissipation, drunkenness, poverty, and ruin. He saw all this, and even in his unconverted state, he had too elevated a mind to relish these things; but when he became pious, he avoided them more than ever. The law of the Lord was his delight, and he endeavoured to shun the appearance of evil.

As age advanced upon him, I found that he took great delight in meditating among the tombs. His business frequently called him to an island in which was a large grave yard,— "a place to bury strangers in." Here many of his acquaintance were mouldering to dust—and he visited their graves, and often had profitable and salutary lessons for gratitude, and humiliation, and wonder, and love, amidst these silent monitors. On one grave stone he saw a date 1799, which seemed to say, if you had died in *that* year, you would have died in an unconverted state, and what would have been the consequence? Why, "except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." On another stone he was

reminded of circumstances when he was living without God, without hope, in the world. On another he saw the name of a man with whom he had taken sweet counsel, and walked to the house of God in company, and joined in the song of praise and adoration; and with such scenes before him, how could he but exclaim, "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me. He took me up out of an horrible pit, and from the miry clay, and hath set my feet upon a rock and established my going, and hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God." I suppose he never came away from these 'sepulchres,' without a spiritual advantage.

He was blessed with a fine constitution through life, and was spared to see all his family grow up to years of maturity. Towards the close of his days he had warnings given to him that the house of his tabernacle would be dissolved—that the messenger was coming: but it did not alarm him. No—*the sting of death had long been extracted!*

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. O the riches of the covenant of grace, which can make a sinner so happy in the prospect of entering into the presence of God!

Many years ago, proposals were made for us to have a new chapel, in which our own families, and generations yet unborn, might worship the God of their fathers. The prospect of it greatly delighted him, and he offered me a large sum of money towards it—but we could not accomplish it then. However, he lived to see the chapel erected, and he enjoyed the unspeakable felicity of meeting with his brethren in it a few times, before he joined the Church above.

One of the last public acts which he performed for the honour of his blessed Master, was to present a chapel clock, with two faces—one facing the pulpit, and the other the lecture room. He superintended the fixing it himself, and left it as his last gift to the church.

There it stands ! a speaking, striking monument of his fidelity, zeal, and love—saying—

“ And in God’s house for evermore,
My dwelling place shall be.”

There it stands ! a speaking, striking monitor to the preacher, saying, “ *Work while it is called to-day.*”

There it stands ! a speaking, striking monitor to the congregation, saying, “ *Be ye also ready, for at such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.*”

There it stands ! a speaking, striking monitor to the family, saying, “ *Be ye followers of God, as dear children.*”

There it stands ! as much a trophy of the grace of God, as the spy-glass which he gave to me.

He just fixed it, and saw it work, and then went home and sickened for a few days, and died. His friends carried him to his burial, and wept over him—and each of them might well say, “ Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”

As we see the grave close upon such a man, and think of his blessedness before the throne of God, we cannot help thinking, what a rich legacy he has bequeathed to his family, compared with some who die worth a hundred thousand pounds. His example, his instructions, and his prayers, will leave effects which will last for ever.

There are multitudes of *widows* in the world, but O how few can speak of the faith, and hope, and holy joy of their departed husbands, like the widow of the watchmaker! All these widows must die, but alas! how few comparatively can look forward with that full assurance of meeting their husbands in heaven, as my friend can do! Many of them have more houses, and more lands, but how few have such rich consolation? It is hard to part with such a husband—but a voice from the throne says, "*Daughter, weep not.*"

The children of such a father have much to encourage them. O what an inheritance is such a parent's prayers! From the hour

he began to pray for himself, he began to wrestle for his children; and the thought should animate them to press on to the attainment of the same excellencies as those which adorned the character of their sainted parent. The Apostle Paul said, "*By the grace of God I am what I am.*" Their father said; "By the grace of God I am what I am;" and if the children seek His grace, God will give it to them. "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Come learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. Come, and ye shall find *rest unto your souls.*"

Before I conclude, I cannot help noticing, what a comfort it is to ministers, when they see such decided proofs of conversion, through their ministry. The ministerial office is frequently attended with many heavy trials. Indeed it could hardly be expected to be otherwise, if they watch for souls as those that must give an account. To be always on the watch is *tiresome* work. To pull men out of the fire is *dangerous* work.

To cry aloud and spare not is *hard* work. And to reprove and rebuke is often *thankless* work; and ministers may well exclaim, "*Who is sufficient for these things?*" but if one such conversion as this can be put into the opposite scale, it will outweigh almost all the trials of a long life. He was the first person of whom I heard who was blessed by my labours in that distant land. I felt a peculiar love to him, as the first fruits of my ministry. Every year afterward he increased my joy—and now he is gone to heaven, I feel unmingled pleasure in raising this feeble monument to the excellence of his character, to the blessedness of religion, and to the honour of God!

